Scotland County group tours N.C. State campus

By Brenda Gilbert
(State Advisory member, South Central District)

The Scotland County Cooperative Extension Advisory Council recently toured various programs at N. C. State University, in campus site visits organized by council members. Also joining the Scotland County delegation on the tour was Sylvia Churchwell, State Advisory Council (SAC) member.

Leon Butler arranged for a tour of the Solar House, which was built in 1981 to research and demonstrate the benefits of passive solar, solar water heating and solar electricity. The Solar Center now researches all renewable energy areas, including wind and biomass, and has expanded to a full-time staff of more than 30 people.

Gray Gilbert scheduled a visit the College of Veterinary Medicine — a tour that included the small and large animal hospitals which treat more than 20,000 animals each year. Council members also saw the progress being made on the Randall B. Terry Jr. Companion Animal Veterinary Medical Center. Scheduled for completion in early 2011, the Terry Center will more than double the size of the current companion animal hospital.

Laurene Stubbs then led the group to the JC Raulston Arboretum and a guided tour of the nationally acclaimed garden that has one of the most diverse collections of landscape plants adapted for use in the Southeast. And, just across Hillsborough Street from the arboretum, the group had lunch at the University Club, as arranged by Beatrice Sams and Brenda Gilbert.

The next stop, organized by Bunny Anderson, was the Industrial Extension Service (IES), where the group learned about the arm of the university which

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Extension shows successes in North Central District

By Sylvia J. Churchwell
(State Advisory member, South Central District)

Cooperative Extension in North Carolina continues to provide a multitude of services to the state’s citizens in the areas of agriculture diversification, safe and nutritional food systems and economic development. That was the message in June from the North Central District to N.C. A&T State University’s Strategic Planning Committee and N.C. State University’s State Advisory Council, when advisory leaders from the two universities met in Burlington.

Co-Chairs Lynn Yokley and Allan Oocumma led the meeting, as Dr. Ray McKinnie of N.C. A&T and Dr. Joe Zublena of N.C. State shared administrative updates, noting the budget challenges confronting Extension in various states. Zublena and McKinnie asked members for group discussion of questions related to the budget shortfall. Members were also asked how we can use our councils to do a better job of aiding the organization in dealing with budget reversions, reduced staff experience

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North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service partners with volunteers as advisory leaders and in all program areas: sustaining agriculture and forestry, protecting the environment, maintaining viable communities, developing responsible youth, and developing strong, healthy and safe families. Across the state, there are more than 22,500 advisory leaders plus an additional 56,000 programmatic volunteers — all a part of our Extension Family.

Extension volunteers are a key to our success, because, without their assistance, we would not be able to provide programs at the current level. Volunteers have a passion for helping others and are always willing to help. Their dedication is inspiring not only to those they help but to Extension staff members, as well. Words cannot express our appreciation for all that they do to assist Extension in providing educational programs to our citizens in every county in the state and the Eastern Band of Cherokees.

It is a pleasure and a privilege to work with volunteers as they help to enrich the lives of our clientele, our partners and communities. A heartfelt thanks goes to North Carolina Cooperative Extension’s volunteers!

Volunteers — A vital part of our Extension family

Vance County hosts leadership council

Among participants: (from left) Rev. Dr. Francis Mann, Forsyth County 4-H leader, Dr. Daniel Lyons, Magnolia Williams and Dr. Ray McKinnie of N.C. A&T.

In March, Magnolia H. Williams, a member of Vance County ALS and of N.C. A&T’s Strategic Planning Council, worked with Wayne Rowland, Vance County agricultural technician, and Dr. Daniel M. Lyons, N.C. A&T Cooperative Extension’s regional director, to bring the Central Region Grassroots Leadership Council to Vance County.

Williams moderated a panel discussion on Extension programs to help clients during difficult times. The panel included a 4-H leader, a community resource development volunteer, a family and consumer sciences volunteer and FCS agent, and a Master Gardener volunteer. The featured speaker was Rose Marie White-Hearn from the N.C. Department of Justice.

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supports North Carolina business in the workplace. The IES helps companies stay abreast of the latest technologies and best practices in engineering and business management. An independent survey says that IES clients have reported that their services have been worth more than $500 million to the state — and by the end of the year, they hope to have generated $1 billion for the state in a campaign they call 1B4NC. Gene Fornarno, Industrial Extension specialist, also mentioned the work that has been done with many businesses in Scotland County.

Cooperative Extension brings the resources of the two land-grant universities, N.C. State and N.C. A&T, to the county level. This trip gave our council a firsthand look at some of the Extension programs at the university level.
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level and marketing our organization.

Presentations showcased programs, advocacy efforts, marketing strategies, and the introduction of new initiatives.

Among the more anticipated activities of each advisory leadership meeting are on-site visits to agribusinesses, areas of natural resource improvements and other programs that aid in sustaining quality communities and enhancing economic growth. On June 2, the group visited the Iron Gate Winery in Mebane, Taylor Fish Farm in Cedar Grove, Thompson Shrimp Farm in Cedar Grove, Sunset Ridge Buffalo Farm in Roxboro and Baldwin Beef Charolais & Egg Production in Yanceyville. Owners reported the use of resources from and technical support provided by Extension agents in establishing the operations and marketing their products.

Sharon Rowland, Extension executive director of development, provided guidance in locating and securing private resources for Cooperative Extension. She cited the example of Breeze Farm, a 269-acre farm in northern Orange County donated to N.C. State by Col. (Ret.) William Breeze Sr. The farm is now operated through a partnership of Extension and Orange County Government, the group learned from a presentation by Mike Lanier, agribusiness area agent at N.C. A&T. The continuing provision of private resources will help to insure continuation of such programs and services.

April PILD Conference

In April, State Advisory Council members Mac Baldwin, Pete Miller, Joann Stroud and Lynn Yokley attended the Public Issues Leadership Development Conference in Washington, D.C. Joy Staton, Extension advisory system leader, and Dr. Ed Jones, Extension associate director, accompanied them.

Robert Eggers, director of the D.C. Central Kitchen, was the keynote speaker. He discussed how the local foods movement is a natural fit for Extension. After preparatory workshops, the SAC group and N.C. A&T’s Strategic Planning Council members visited North Carolina’s Senate and House representatives. Many were receptive to requests for an increase in Smith-Lever funding.

The highlight of the conference was provided by SAC’s Joann Stroud and Pete Miller, who presented a workshop called “Grass Roots Involvement—the N.C. Model.”

Campaign for Counties reaches milestone

Through the hard work of volunteers, county staffs, and regional directors of development, the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Campaign for Counties has reached another milestone in providing direct financial support to Extension programs at the county level. As of Feb. 1, the total number of endowments and enhancement funds that provide program support, scholarships and future positions has reached 325 accounts in 98 counties. These funds can make a difference today and in perpetuity serving the citizens of each county.

From left are Pete Miller, SE District Extension Director Greg Hoover, Carol Hoover, Rep. Mike McIntyre, Joann Stroud, Sybil Mitchell-Simmons, Joy Staton and Mac Baldwin.
Hilda Baskerville grew up, the 16th of 18 children, on a farm in Warren County. "We grew our own vegetables and a very large family," recalls Hilda, who went to school in Warren County, later became a single mom and, while working full time, attended college. She earned her bachelor’s degree and graduated with honors (cum laude). While in school, she worked as a production clerk before beginning her career at the Warren County Health Department as Healthy Carolinians Coordinator.

Healthy Carolinians has grown into a partnership of many county agencies and involved citizens. Baskerville keeps the group together through the work of three subcommittees — Fitness and Nutrition (FAN), Injury Prevention & Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse Prevention — each of which includes Cooperative Extension staff participation. "Serving on the Warren County Cooperative Extension Advisory Team has been a great experience, and I am learning a lot about different programs that Extension offers for the county," said Baskerville.

Both she, as a youngster, and her children participated in 4-H, attending 4-H camp every summer. She now continues to be involved with Cooperative Extension. For example, she serves on the Extension family and consumer sciences Aging with Gusto committee and provides input and guidance working on community surveys. Among other noteworthy activities, she said, "The Farmers Market is a great new program that can be used by all people in the county. When folks do not have time to start their own garden, they now have access to fresh fruits and veggies and can support local merchants through their purchases."

She would like to see the continued support and collaboration between Cooperative Extension, Healthy Carolinians and other agencies "where we work together for the overall best things for all citizens of Warren County."

Spotlight Ralph Warren

One of the strengths of the State Advisory Council is the widely varied experiences of its members and their very different paths leading to this service. My mother’s extended family in Pamlico County has been involved with Extension for decades, both through family farming and through the forerunners of today’s Extension and Community Association. While aware of the value that they placed on Extension, I had no direct connection until my family and I moved to rural southwestern Orange County in 1974. My profession was research and development engineering with international business operations based in Research Triangle Park, but our home life was in a community that was a compatible mix of long-standing farm families and newer "escapes" to rural living. One of the agencies that assisted the integration of new RTP and university families was Extension Homemakers. As the wives from original families met and welcomed the new arrivals into their Extension work, the rest of the new families gained an Extension connection.

Over the years, both my wife and I were active volunteers in Orange County, serving on committees and boards. We were especially active in schools, which led to my being elected to the presidency of the Orange County Education Foundation and then to two terms on the Orange County School Board. These experiences drove home the value of community building and citizen involvement. As I moved from the business world to take top-level school administrative positions for 9 years, I saw firsthand the need for citizen involvement and the value of raising knowledge and skills across a community.

As I returned home from my school leadership work in two other states I was asked to rejoin activities at the N.C. School Boards Association for state level activities. I also looked to volunteer on the county level and completed projects at the Orange County Center for county and district ECA functions. Dr. Fletcher Barber Jr. invited me to more Extension participation, which led, ultimately, to my being appointed to the SAC.

I am particularly grateful to be a member of this Council because of Extension’s unique ability to reach and to serve literally every corner of every county in North Carolina. Anyone who volunteers for community service hopes to contribute where the work can make a real difference. SAC members are in a position to work with the County Extension directors and county councils of their individual clusters, their fellow SAC members, district Extension directors and university staff to help bring critical knowledge and programs to all of our state’s communities. Finally, I have found not only valuable volunteer work but also a committed and genuinely enjoyable group of leaders sharing that work.

— Ralph Warren

Spotlight Hilda Baskerville

Both she, as a youngster, and her children participated in 4-H, attending 4-H camp every summer. She now continues to be involved with Cooperative Extension. For example, she serves on the Extension family and consumer sciences Aging with Gusto committee and provides input and guidance working on community surveys. Among other noteworthy activities, she said, "The Farmers Market is a great new program that can be used by all people in the county. When folks do not have time to start their own garden, they now have access to fresh fruits and veggies and can support local merchants through their purchases."

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